Simply Better!
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Self-Assessment System

Human Resource Development

Dimension Workbook

These icons will help you to find your way through all Simply Better! products:

Resources	Answer-Score-Brainstorm	Group Exercise	Case Study
Helpful Hints	Key terms and Concepts	Useful Notes	World Class

Introduction

Human Resource Development examines the effectiveness of your organization's efforts to develop and realize the full potential of the workforce, including management. It also examines efforts to build and maintain an environment for workforce excellence, which is conducive to increased involvement, empowerment, personal and organizational growth, and labor/management cooperation.

By the time you have completed the dimension, you will have identified strengths and opportunities for improvement in these four sections:

A. Human Resource Planning and Evaluation

How your organization implements, reviews and improves its human resource planning and practices.

B. High Performance Work and Job Design

How your organization's work and job design create opportunities for all employees to contribute effectively to organizational goals.

C. Employee Education, Training, and Development

How your organization uses education and training to meet key performance objectives.

D. Employee Well-Being and Satisfaction

How labor and management maintain a work environment conducive to the well-being and growth of all employees.

In a world class organization, success in improving performance depends on the skills and motivation of its workforce. Employee success requires meaningful opportunities to learn, practice new skills, and contribute to performance objectives.

Increasingly, training, development and work design is tailored to a more diverse workforce and to more flexible, high performance work practices.

Major challenges in the area of workforce development include the integration and alignment of human resource management with vision, goals, operational plans, and strategic change processes. Addressing these challenges involves learning new ways of aligning employee and performance data with objectives and strategic plans.

Customer

The people, organizations, or groups receiving the products or services of your organization. In the S-A-S, customers are job-seekers and employers, the direct beneficiaries of local workforce development services.

High Performance Organization

Organizations that value and act on four basic tenents: focus on customer, employee involvement in decision-making, support for teamwork, and commitment to continuous improvement.

Customer Driven Quality

Consistently meeting and/or exceeding the ever-increasing needs and expectations of the customer.

Employee Involvement

Providing employees with opportunities to participate in planning and decision making processes which traditionally have been reserved for management.

Getting Started

Now that you are familiar with the continuous improvement concepts and terms for Human Resource Development, you are ready to look at how your own organization handles these issues. There are five exercises to complete this dimension.

Answer the Questions

This exercise involves developing a shared understanding of how your organization works. When discussing and answering the questions, your team should develop a common understanding of what is done, who does it, how often, how well, the results achieved, and how well it is documented.

Score the Questions

This exercise is about determining a consensus team score for each section. Each question or sub-element of a question has equal weight. Please see the instructions on the next page.

Brainstorm Strengths and Opportunities

This exercise will help you identify your organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement. Brainstorming can occur after each question is scored or after the entire section has been scored. The purpose of brainstorming is to get ideas out quickly; discussion will come later during the next exercise. All ideas should be recorded using a flip chart or the blank spaces provided in the Brainstorm sections of the booklet.

Discuss and Rank Strengths and Opportunities

This exercise will help you to make your many lists of strengths and opportunities much more manageable. It will be done after you have finished answering, scoring, and brainstorming for all sections in the dimension. Please see the instructions near the end of the booklet.

Plan for Action

This exercise will lead your team through several initial steps in the overall process for implementing continuous improvement changes. This step may be optional for your team at this stage, depending on what process your organization has chosen to develop a final action plan.

Score the Questions

Follow these instructions to find your team score for where your organization stands on Human Resource Development.

Step One

Individually or as a team decide where your organization falls along the thermometer. This is a continuum, so don't be afraid to locate yourself anywhere along the thermometer.

Step Two

Using a crayon or marker, fill in the thermometer up to the point on the scale which best matches your organization. Remember, this is a subjective judgment, so precision is impossible!

Step Three

For each section, mark the average score on the bottom scale. You may want to eyeball the average length of the lines to come up with a score, or you may want to compute the average. Again, because this is subjective, precise scoring is not necessary.

0%   50%   100%
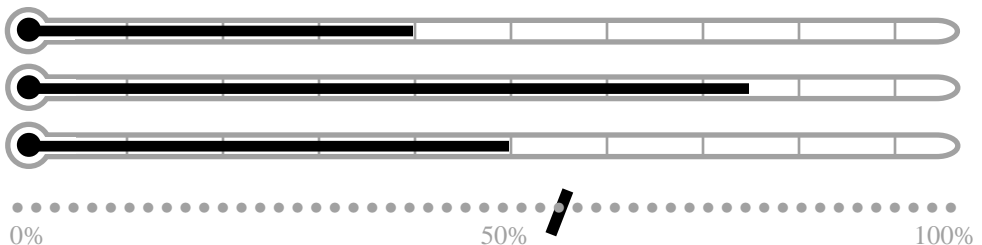
In this example, the score is about 55%, which is very good! Most organizations seriously involved in quality and continuous improvement can expect to fall in the 40% - 60% range. Even nationally recognized award winners rarely score above 75% across all categories.

Answer Score Brainstorm

Within each of the Sections - **A** through **D** - you will repeat the following three exercises:

- **Answer** the questions as a team.

- **Score** your organization.

- **Brainstorm** strengths and opportunities for improvement.

After you have covered all of the sections in the dimension, you will complete your work by doing the final two exercises:

- **Discuss and rank** your entire list of strengths and opportunities for improvement.

- **Plan** for action (optional at this stage).

You now have the background information and instructions you need to begin to answer, score and brainstorm the questions for Human Resource Development. Before you continue, be sure that everyone on your team understands the general concepts and terms being used. Also, be sure that everyone has a clear understanding of the instructions and scoring system. Finally, check for consensus about the process that will be used. Remember, this is your process, so feel free to modify and improve it to suit the needs of your team and organization.

A. Human Resource Planning and Evaluation

You may complete this section one of two ways:

Option 1	Option 2
• **Answer** the entire section • **Score** the entire section • **Brainstorm** the entire section	• **Answer** question 1 • **Score** question 1 • **Brainstorm** question 1 • Continue with questions 2-3

Answer these questions:

1. **How do we translate the overall requirements from strategic planning into specific human resource plans?**

2. **What are our plans for: a) changes in work design to improve flexibility, innovation, and rapid response; b) employee development, education, and training; c) changes in compensation, recognition, and benefits; and d) recruitment, including expected changes in demographics?**

3. **What process do we use to review and improve our human resource planning and practices?**

Q1. This area deals with the linkage between human resource planning and the organization's strategic directions so that high performance workplace practices become part of a coordinated organizational strategy.

Q2. Evaluation might include how employee-related data, such as satisfaction, absenteeism and turnover, and operational results, are used and analyzed; the extent of deployment of education and training throughout the organization; comparison of human resource practices at other organizations; assessment of the linkage between human resource practices and organizational results; and availability of reliable and complete human resource data and information for strategic and operational planning.
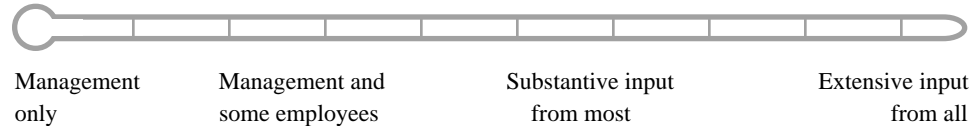
Score Section A

1. How do we translate the overall requirements from strategic planning into specific human resource plans?

Our process for planning for both short-term and long-term human resource needs is aligned with our strategic customer and performance goal setting process:

Not aligned	Partially aligned	Mostly aligned	Directly aligned

In developing our plan, we get input from employees, labor, and management:

| Management only	Management and some employees	Substantive input from most	Extensive input from all

2. What are our plans for: a) changes in work design to improve flexibility, innovation, and rapid response; b) employee development, education, and training; c) changes in compensation, recognition, and benefits; and d) recruitment, including expected changes in demographics?

Our short-term and long-term plans in work design are linked to achieving our customer satisfaction, quality and performance goals and improving employee well-being:

| Not linked	Somewhat linked	Moderately linked	Strongly linked
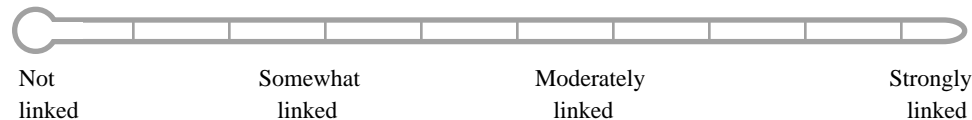
Our short-term and long-term plans in employee development are linked to achieving our customer satisfaction, quality and performance goals and improving employee well-being:

Not linked	Somewhat linked	Moderately linked	Strongly linked
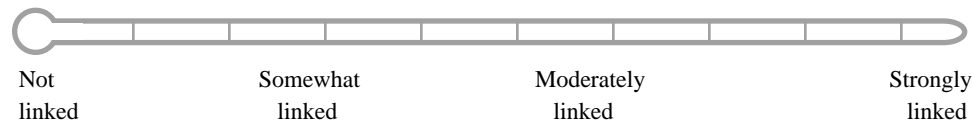
Our short-term and long-term plans in compensation/recognition are linked to achieving customer satisfaction, quality and performance goals and improving employee well-being:

Not linked	Somewhat linked	Moderately linked	Strongly linked

Our short-term and long-term plans in recruitment are linked to achieving our customer satisfaction, quality and performance goals and improving employee well-being:
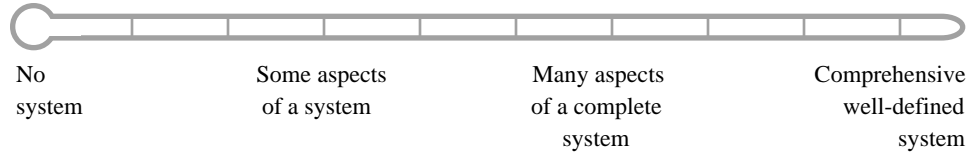
Not linked	Somewhat linked	Moderately linked	Strongly linked
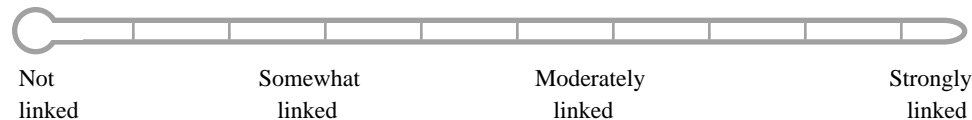
3. What process do we use to review and improve our human resource planning and practices?

Our methods and procedures for reviewing and improving our human resource planning comprise:

| No system | Some aspects of a system | Many aspects of a complete system | Comprehensive well-defined system |

We review and improve our human resource planning and practices:

| Never | Occasionally | Often | Continuously |

0%   50%   100%

Brainstorm Section A

- Going in a circle, have each member of the team share one strength (passing is allowed).

- Record the idea on a flipchart; discuss the idea only enough to make sure that it is correctly recorded.

- Keep going around until everyone's ideas are recorded.

- Repeat the same process for opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

B. High Performance Work and Job Design

You may complete this section one of two ways:

Option 1

- **Answer** the entire section
- **Score** the entire section
- **Brainstorm** the entire section

Option 2

- **Answer** question 1
- **Score** question 1
- **Brainstorm** question 1
- Continue with questions 2-4

Answer these questions:

1. **How does our organization's work and job design create opportunities for initiative and self-directed responsibility?**

2. **How do our work and job design foster flexibility and rapid response to changing requirements?**

3. **How do we communicate across functions or units in our organization?**

4. **How do our pay and recognition systems for individuals and teams reinforce effective work and job design?**

Score Section B

1. How does our organization's work and job design create opportunities for initiative and self-directed responsibility?

We have both formal and informal, and temporary and long-term opportunities to work in a variety of self-managed teams, problem solving groups, functional units, and multi-locational teams linked through technology.
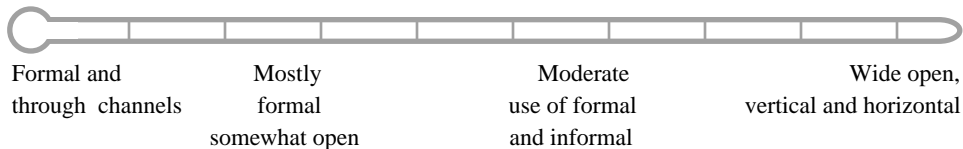
No opportunities	Some opportunities	Many opportunities	Continuous variety of opportunities
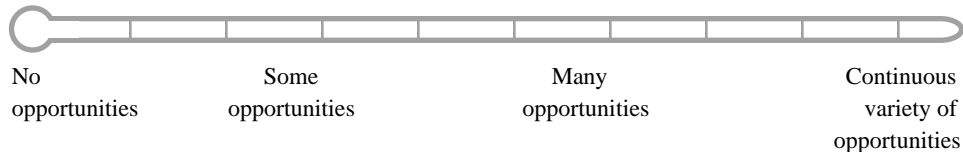
2. How does our work and job design foster flexibility and rapid response to changing requirements?

We have simplified job classifications, provided cross training, done job rotation, revised work layout and work locations, increased use of technology, and modified the flow of information to support local decision making.
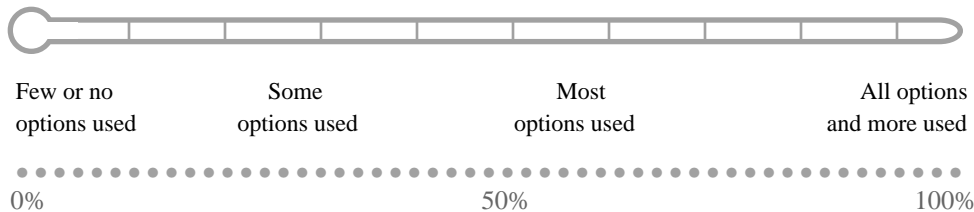
No action	Some actions taken	Most actions taken	All actions taken and more
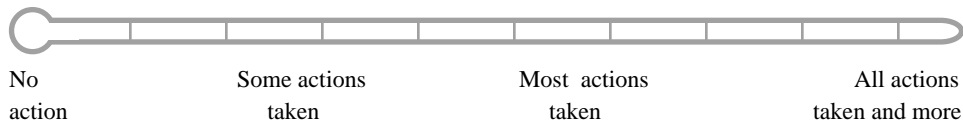
3. How do we communicate across functions or units in our organization?

Our communication could best be described as:

Formal and through channels	Mostly formal somewhat open	Moderate use of formal and informal	Wide open, vertical and horizontal

4. How do our pay and recognition systems for individuals and teams reinforce effective work and job design?

We get pay and recognition for both skill building and direct contribution to achievement of organizational goals through: a) work in teams or as individuals, b) monetary and non-monetary, c) formal and informal, and d) from peers and supervisors.

Few or no options used	Some options used	Most options used	All options and more used

0%   50%   100%

Brainstorm Section B

- Going in a circle, have each member of the team share one strength (passing is allowed).

- Record the idea on a flipchart; discuss the idea only enough to make sure that it is correctly recorded.

- Keep going around until everyone's ideas are recorded.

- Repeat the same process for opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

C. Employee Education, Training, and Development

You may complete this section one of two ways:

Option 1

- **Answer** the entire section
- **Score** the entire section
- **Brainstorm** the entire section

Option 2

- **Answer** question 1
- **Score** question 1
- **Brainstorm** question 1
- Continue with questions 2-4

Answer these questions:

A

1. **How does our organization use education and training to meet key performance objectives?**

2. **How do we determine who gets what education or training?**

3. **How are employees in our organization involved in determining specific education and training needs and designing education and training?**

4. **How do we evaluate the effectiveness of our education and training efforts?**

Score Section C

1. How does our organization use education and training to meet key performance objectives?

We make education and training available in a number of areas such as: current job skills, basic education, leadership skills, communication, teamwork, problem solving, customer service, continuous improvement, and cross-functional job functions.

No areas   Some areas   Most areas   All of the above and more
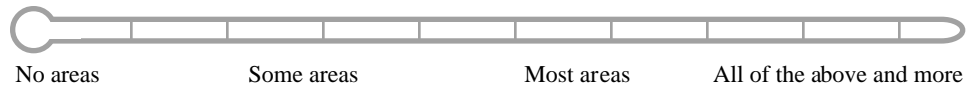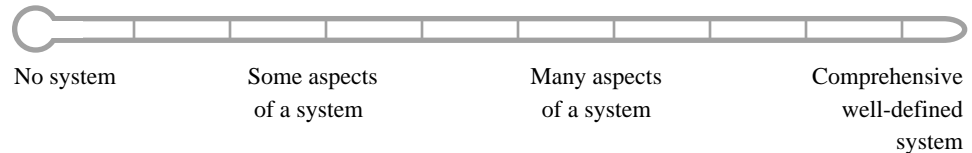
We provide additional training for frontline employees in listening, soliciting comments from customers, handling complaints, customer retention, and managing customer expectations.
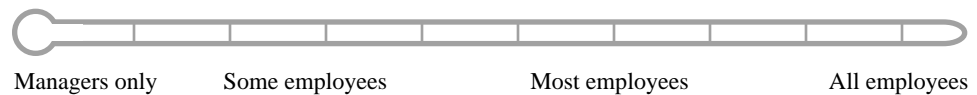
No areas   Some areas   Most areas   All and more

2. How do we determine who gets what education or training?

System is in place to review all employees' knowledge and skill needs for current positions as well as future progression or development for other jobs in the organization.

No system   Some aspects   Many aspects   Comprehensive
                   of a system   of a system   well-defined
                                                               system

The system is available to:

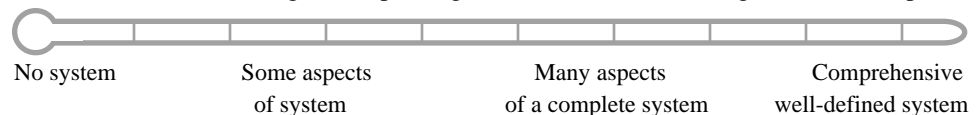Managers only   Some employees   Most employees   All employees

3. How are employees in our organization involved in determining specific education and training needs and designing education and training?
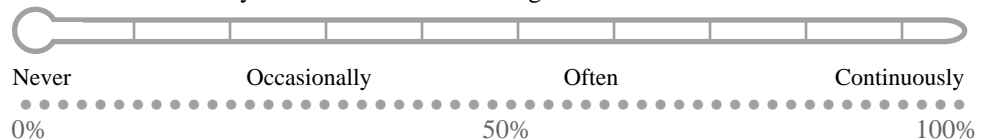
Employees are involved:

Not   Some   Extensive   Self-managed
involved   consultation involvement   process
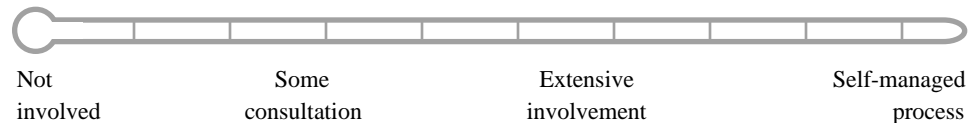
4. How do we evaluate the effectiveness of our education and training efforts?

Our methods for reviewing and improving our education and training activities comprise:

No system   Some aspects   Many aspects   Comprehensive
                   of system   of a complete system well-defined system

We review and modify our education and training activities:

Never   Occasionally   Often   Continuously

0%   50%   100%

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Brainstorm Section C

- Going in a circle, have each member of the team share one strength (passing is allowed).

- Record the idea on a flipchart; discuss the idea only enough to make sure that it is correctly recorded.

- Keep going around until everyone's ideas are recorded.

- Repeat the same process for opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

D. Employee Well-Being and Satisfaction

You may complete this section one of two ways:

Option 1

- **Answer** the entire section
- **Score** the entire section
- **Brainstorm** the entire section

Option 2

- **Answer** question 1
- **Score** question 1
- **Brainstorm** question 1
- Continue with questions 2-3

Answer these questions:

1. **What improvement plans does our organization have that address employee health, safety, and ergonomics?**

2. **What services, facilities, activities, and opportunities does our organization make available to support general employee well-being and satisfaction?**

3. **How do we determine employee satisfaction, well-being, and motivation?**

Q2. Examples of services, facilities, activities, and opportunities are: personal and career counseling, career development opportunities, recreational or cultural activities, non-work-related education, day care, special leave for community service, flexible work hours, and out placement.

Q3. Examples of specific factors which might affect satisfaction, well-being, and motivation are: effective employee problem or grievance resolution, safety, employee views of leadership, development and career opportunities, preparation for changes in technology, work enviroment, workload, cooperation and teamwork, recognition, pay and benefits, equality of opportunity, and communication.

Score Section D

1. What improvement plans does our organization have that address employee health, safety, and ergonomics?

Plans are in place with improvement requirements, measures, and targets for health, safety and ergonomics:
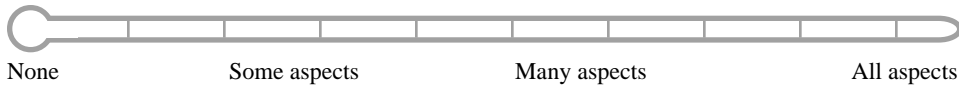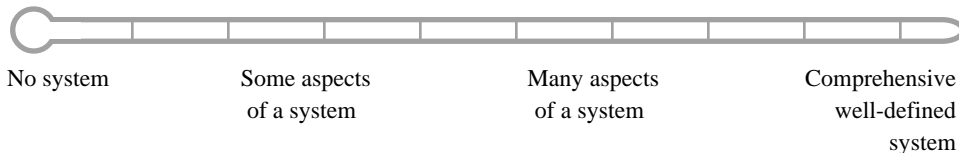
None	Some aspects	Many aspects	All aspects

2. What services, facilities, activities, and opportunities does our organization make available to support general employee well-being and satisfaction ?

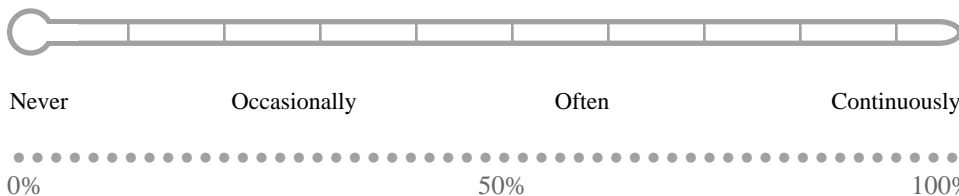Well-being and satisfaction are valued in our organization:

Not valued	Moderately	Highly	Very highly

3. How do we determine employee satisfaction, well-being, and motivation?

Our methods for determing satisfaction, well-being, and motivation comprise:

No system	Some aspects of a system	Many aspects of a system	Comprehensive well-defined system

We use our approach and methods:

Never	Occasionally	Often	Continuously

0%	50%	100%

Brainstorm Section D

- Going in a circle, have each member of the team share one strength (passing is allowed).

- Record the idea on a flipchart; discuss the idea only enough to make sure that it is correctly recorded.

- Keep going around until everyone's ideas are recorded.

- Repeat the same process for opportunities for improvement.

Strengths

Opportunities for Improvement

Summary of Team Scores

Average the four scores to get an overall score for Human Resource Development

A. Human Resource Planning and Evaluation ⬜ %

D. Employee Well-Being and Satisfaction ⬜ %

B. High Performance Work and Job Design ⬜ %

C. Employee Education, Training, and Development ⬜ %

Overall **S**core: **%**

Remember, this is not a score of how good your organization is - it is a score reflecting how far you are on the road to continuous improvement. This is what the scores tell you:

0% - 10%
You have not or have barely begun to implement continuous improvement into your processes.

10% - 30%
You have begun to implement continuous improvement in a few of your processes.

30% - 60%
You have implemented continuous improvement in a wide range of your processes in many parts of your organization.

60% - 80%
You have implemented continuous improvement processes throughout virtually all of your organization.

80% and above
You have world-class, exceptionally sophisticated processes in all areas of your organization, and you continuously improve the processes themselves.

Discuss and Rank Strengths and Opportunities

Now that you have answered and scored the questions and brainstormed strengths and opportunities for improvement, you need to make some sense of the large quantities of information you have. This exercise will help you to make this information much more manageable. Your flipcharts should be hung around the room where everyone can see them.

• **Group** the similar strengths and opportunities into categories to make the list more manageable. Depending on how many items you have, you may want to start out by brainstorming categories, by eliminating duplicate items, or by marking similar items with numbers or colored dots. Individual items may fall into more than one category. As with brainstorming, there should not be much discussion at this stage, just enough to develop the categories.

• **Choose** the order in which you want to discuss the strengths and opportunities listed. Some may not require much discussion. It can be helpful to set time limits for each item.

• **Discuss** the strengths and opportunities in depth. You do not need to solve problems now; you only need to be sure that you come to a common understanding of which are the most vital to be worked on or represent potential for taking action right away.

• **Rank** the opportunities in the order of importance for developing next steps and future actions.

Plan for Action

Many teams will be instructed by the coordinator to begin the process of planning for action. This process will lead your team through action planning steps and will result in an initial redesign of a service or process.

• **Select** a service or process to be improved. From the list of Opportunities for Improvement select one of the top vital few which were identified as a result of answering the questions in each dimension. The relative scores for each question or section should provide a starting point for identifying where the largest gaps exist. The priorities for improvement in the organization should also be considered. Decision can be reached by multi-voting and coming to consensus.

• **Describe** the current process. Definition of the current situation began while answering the questions. Further research is now needed to identify the key features of the current process, describe the work flow, and identify current process measures.

• **Determine** the wants, needs, and expectations for the service or process. Determine who the 'customers' of the process are and what they want, need and expect. This step helps define the future desired state for the area under improvement.

• **Gather** data to determine the extent to which the current process meets the wants and expectations. Doing this step provides vital measurable information about the extent to which current reality meets the desired level of performance.

• **Redesign** the improved process to meet the wants, needs, and expectations. Define the design criteria and design the improved process. A measurement system should also be established, and requirements for implementation should be determined.

Take Action

After your team completes the five action planning steps for several of the top-ranked opportunities for improvement, it is time to stop. Your assessment work within this dimension is complete.

Congratulate yourselves for your hard work and accomplishments!

Your next steps are to get together with all the other dimension teams to share what everyone has found and to discuss and rank all the vital opportunities. Once your organization chooses the most important opportunities for taking action, you are ready to take the last two steps in the continuous process improvement model - implement the improvement and manage the process of change.

• **Implement** the improvement. Develop an implementation plan which specifies desired results, assigns responsibilities, and provides time frames. The plan should be approved, communicated, and monitored for results.

• **Manage** the process of change, obtain customer feedback, monitor performance and impact, communicate the results, and fine tune the process by identifying new areas for improvement.